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E CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

IEWS LETTER

VOLUME III
NUMBER 1

WINTER, 1956

From the Annual Report for 1955

The year 1955 was a period of steady growth for our Historical Society. We ave continued to emphasize the importance of the local church being aware of its wn life in the community, from its earliest history to the present. Embodied in its istory are the results of the hopes, the failures and the victories of those who in ther years have prayed, labored and sacrificed, that they and those coming after iem might be instructed for their own time and condition. To be aware of the ilues of its own history gives a church the sense of permanence and of direction in olving its problems. Hence the local church is the center of the Society's interest.

The special cultivation of the approximately 200 churches that reach an anni- ersary date each year affords the Society the opportunity to carry forward a project of lucational merit. This phase of our work is appreciated by the churches and also y the conferences, and brings us a varied correspondence and many open doors. The sing interest in the history of their own church kindles the interest of its members the history of our fellowship and the history of Christianity in its varied aspects.

During the year we have gathered 72 local church histories and enrolled 62 new cal church historians. We are assisting 6 state conferences in developing their own story. We have now 213 churches and 171 individuals as sustaining members of ie Society.

A second important service of the Society is made possible by the requests that me for information on a variety of subjects. There is a growing interest in our story on many levels — pastors, women's societies, high school, college and post- aduate students — that keeps us hunting desired information. Such requests are ways interesting, for there is nothing more satisfying than contact with grow- g minds.

The Forefathers' Day material has been used not only in the observance of the y in the public service of worship, but also by some churches in the church school. he change by the General Council of the day of observance to the Sunday before hanksgiving has given wide satisfaction. The bringing of Forefathers' Day, Com- ct Day and National Thanksgiving into close relationship has added to the gnificance of each day.

Financially we are maturing, and with the loyal support of our General Council, ate Conferences, The American Board, The Board of Home Missions, the Semi- ries and interested churches and individuals, we can look forward with a degree of nfidence. The report of the Treasurer indicates that we close the year with a lance, and this is good, since we need a working balance as receipts during the mmer and early fall are usually small and in this period we have our heaviest penses for our annual appeal in September and the Forefathers' Day program in ctober. We practice all possible economies, for we realize the contributions we ceive are for the most part the result of sacrificial giving and our funds must be ed with discretion. Many alluring opportunities for expansion present themselves, it we are determined to live within our available means.

F. L. F.

FROM THE MINUTES, ANNUAL MEETING

Report of the President:

1. We welcome those who are gathered here for this Annual Meeting of our Society.

2. We are heartily thankful to our Sponsoring Agencies for their continued support and for their representatives on our Board of Governors.

3. We are glad for the loyalty of our Members at Large, for their presence here today, and for their unfailing interest.

4. and 5. We note, with sorrow, the absence of one who served this Society, with wisdom and devotion, as Chairman of its Finance Committee, Mr. P. Donald Folwell, who entered the Life Eternal on the third day of December, 1955. We shall cherish his memory as that of a loyal friend, and a truly great layman of our Fellowship.

6. We repeat our "Thank You" of a year ago, with added emphasis, to Mr. Thomas Todd, representative of the American Congregational Association on our Board of Governors, for his generous help in making possible the continued publication of our News Letter.

7. To the American Congregational Association and to its Librarian, Mr. John Harrer, our Treasurer, we give thanks for his efficient service and wise counsel.

8. For Helen Kenyon, our Vice President for Public Relations, and "missionary extraordinary" of our Society, who gives a constant witness to her faith in our cause, we would gladly lead this meeting in "Three cheers for her" if that were permissible in such a dignified company.

9. To Fred Fagley we give a silent vote of gratitude. . . .

Report of the Treasurer:

The annual report shows receipts $7,504.26; disbursements $6,526.69. All bills for the year have been paid and there is a working balance as of Dec. 31, 1955.

Report of V. Pres. for Public Relations:

The Society is growing in usefulness and influence and as the Treasurer's report indicated, the Society is becoming well established. We all deeply appreciate the continued support of the American Board, the Board of Home Missions and the General Council. It is recommended that these national agencies be requested to renew their contributions for the current year; that appreciation be expressed for the loyal support of the State Conferences and that so many have made the Society's support a budgetary item. It is gratifying that the number of contributing churches and individuals is increasing, and we hope that this year many more will join in this worthy work.

Report of Christian Church Committe

This Committee has made a fine contributi to our historical material from these Churcl and is continuing its work under the effect leadership of Dr. Warren H. Denison, Grinn Iowa.

BUDGET FOR 1956

Anticipated Expenses

Rent	$ 511
Tel. & Tel.	50
Postage and Mailing	450
Supplies and Books	150
Meetings and Travel	350
Printing and Mimeo.	800
Secretarial asst.	2,420
Secretary	1,600
Advertising and Misc.	179
S. S. (Society's share)	90
Contingencies	500
	$7,100

Sources of Expected Income

The General Council	$2,000
The American Board	500
The Board of Home Missions	750
The Conferences	1,350
The Churches	1,750
Individuals	700
Seminaries	50
	$7,100

Nominating Committee for 1957:

James H. Lightbourne, Sr., Superintende Conference, Chairman; Charles L. Atki American Congregational Association; Mrs. L lie Rounds, American Board; Herbert R. Smi Board of Home Missions; Mervin M. Deer Seminaries; and Roy M. Houghton, Sargent Wellman, Myron W. Fowell, members at lar

A Situation That Needs Attention

When was your church organized? The d is necessary if your church history is to hav firm foundation. What do you think of a p son who says he does not know when he w born! Yet there are such persons — also su churches. As an illustration, the following fr Rev. Myron Fowell, Secy. of the Massachuse Conference: "One church reported its organi tion in last Year Book as 1839, but for ye it reported 1728, and now we find correct d to be 1838. Another reported for years 18 now correct date is 1824. Another report 1821, now 1904; another 1747, correct d 1807; and still another 1860, correct date 18 — and only a portion of the State records viewed."

The office of the Society has a continuo flow of letters of inquiry as to organization dat This year the local church report blank has line for date of organization of the churc Pastors and church clerks are requested to gi attention to this item. Let us bring our Yo Book up to date in this matter.

Action by Iowa Conference

"We recommend that each church in t Conference be urged to select a Church H torian and that the Church Historian se

pies of all pertinent and significant items and tions taken by the church to the State Conrence Office, Grinnell, Iowa; to the Congregaonal Christian Historical Society."

JUDSON FIEBIGER, *Superintendent*

Good News from Southern Convention

"I have located and will make available to he Historical Society certain of the writings of mes O'Kelly — including an essay on 'Slavy,' written in 1789. It reveals the strong olitionist thought among these early churches. have also located his 'Apology,' his 'Vindicaon,' and several other pamphlets and booklets hich he prepared."

WILLIAM T. SCOTT, *Superintendent*

inding Historical Materials

Rev. Clyde Dodder, who has written the hisry of the Chebanse, Illinois, Church, testifies at he was greatly helped in this task by the rap books that had been kept for long years by vo of the church women, by the letters many ad preserved from former members and minisrs that were lent him, and especially by tape cordings made of conversations with elderly rsons, some of whom had spent a long life in e community and who had their own memoes of the tales told by their fathers. Let the cal church historians take note of these suggesons as they are building their archives.

ur Learned Clergy

"There are various reasons why the United ates is less of a book-reading country than any others. Chief among these, perhaps, is r greater addiction to newspapers and magaes.

"We, more than any other people, have fallen ey to that aspect of modern life. Among the ofessions, the clergy alone have escaped it; ey read more widely today, I suspect, than the embers of any other profession. I am thinking rticularly of our doctors, our lawyers, our chers. The bulk of their reading is necessarily ofessional."

J. DONALD ADAMS
New York Times Book Review

A well furnished Divine must study history all sorts: General, National, Ancient and odern, Sacred and Secular.

JOSEPH MEDE (Associate of John Milton)

The value of history lies in the perspective gives us as we take up the problems of the esent.

The advice of Jean Juares is today apropos: We should take from the past its fires not its hes."

In Memory of Mr. P. Donald Folwell

Resolution adopted at the Annual Meeting:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: It is with deep respect and affection for our friend, P. Donald Folwell, that we, the Board of Governors and other members of the Congregational Christian Historical Society, record this minute.

As Chairman of the Finance Committee from the founding of the Society, Mr. Folwell gave generously of his time and ability for the good of the work.

He could always be counted upon to be present at every Committee and Board Meeting. Even though in failing health, he and Mrs. Folwell went to Sunapee, N. H., this past summer for the Budget Review, and as always his quiet advice and kindly humor pervaded the meeting and stand out now in the memory of those present.

The Congregational Christian denomination has much for which to thank Mr. Folwell. This minute records the gratitude of the Historical Society for his guidance and devotion in these early years. To Mrs. Folwell, we extend our deep sympathy and send this record of our enduring appreciation and affection for our friend, Don Folwell.

Birthplace of American Union

War with the French and Indians was just around the corner when on June 19, 1754, representatives of seven American Colonies and chiefs of the Six Nations assembled in Albany to make plans for the impending conflict. There Benjamin Franklin presented his "Albany Plan of Union." This called for the formation of a Council of Delegates, selected by the Colonial Assemblies, which would have authority to deal with Indian affairs and colonial defense.

Franklin's proposal was not adopted, but it started the colonists thinking about the need for union. The meeting, itself, was important as it set a precedent for later colonial gatherings such as the Stamp Act Congress of 1765 and the Continental Congress of 1774.

New York, with suitable ceremonies, celebrated the 200th anniversary of the Albany Congress. In doing so, it paid tribute to Albany as the Birthplace of American Union, and to the early leadership of Ben Franklin.

For Your Scrap Book

Benjamin Franklin was baptized January 24, 1706, in the Old South Church, Boston, when seven days old, as recorded in the early records of that Church. Dr. Frederick Meek, pastor, and Clarence Beasley, church clerk, recently brought the remembrance of this service to public notice. The fact does not seem to have been previously known to historians. **This old Church kept its records!**

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The officers ex officio

"Meeting Houses"

I saw and beheld a great multi
which no man could number.
Revelation 7:

This multitude, the commenta
believe, were the first martyrs who
borne so costly a testimony to
faith. They were already beyond co
ing: and the Church had begun t
what it has ever since been, a fellow
of the seen and the unseen.

In early New England they use
call a church a "Meeting House,"
frequently they still use this bl
name. In a sense far beyond their in
tion every church, however named,
"Meeting House." There worsh
meets fellow-worshiper and all
God. There the past and present m
The very thresholds are worn
vanished feet, the pews recall those
once sat in them, memories walk s
up the aisles. The absent whis
"We are nearer than you think."
there any meeting anywhere like t

Consider, also, how every cong
tion is multiplied by fellow worshipe
other churches, from sea to sea,
neath the palm and the pine. E
worshiper is really the comrade
great multitude which no man can n
ber, the fellowship of loving, the
lieving and the good. In the "M
ing House" men may, by God's g
rise in faith, become strong in hope
be warmed with love.

There the pilgrims of this day
find rest and friendship and renew

GAIUS GLENN ATKI

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Arthur H. Bradford, *President* — John A. Harrer, *Treasurer* — Frederick L. Fagley, *Secretary*

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